

wounds remain, but our community has shown extraordinary courage in dealing with the challenges before us. We will never forget, but we will recover.

Shattering as this ordeal has been, the fundamental character of America has remained the same. And for this we should all be proud. We are still a strong and diverse nation, focused on the pleasures and challenges of everyday life, caught up in the struggle to provide good homes for our children, achieve meaning in our lives, and leave this world a better place after we've gone. We still believe in the importance of our democratic ideals—the foundation on which our country was built, and continues to thrive.

As a nation, we have joined together to provide support for our neighbors, friends, co-workers and fellow Americans. As I have traveled around New York, I have seen remarkable displays of the resilience of the American spirit as we have worked in the recovery effort, giving from both our hearts and our wallets. The tragedy of September 11th was once unimaginable as were the courage and empathy that were displayed that terrible day. Now, it is this strength and this concern for our fellow citizens that redefine us as Americans.

This is what gives us hope. And this is what gives us confidence that, despite the dangers of the world and the challenges our country faces, we will prevail in perpetuating the values we hold dear. I am humbled and honored to stand before you today in remembrance of the tragedy of September 11th and the heroism and patriotism of New Yorkers and all Americans over the past year.

#### THE THREAT OF WILDFIRES

#### HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 26, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of the Colorado General Assembly concerning the mitigation of the threat of wildfires in the national forests through the removal of dead fuel. Resolution 02S-1002, passed by Colorado's General Assembly urges federal action on a fire strategy to comprehensively reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and improve the overall condition of Colorado's forests. The bill further supports utilizing an appropriate mix of fire-prevention activities and management practices including forest restoration, treatment of at-risk forest stands, grazing, selective tree removal, and other measures to control insects and pathogens, removal of excessive dead ground fuels, and small-scale prescribed burns. I commend the work of the Colorado General Assembly for its strong efforts toward the betterment of the state and well being of the people of the great state of Colorado.

I hereby submit for the RECORD Colorado House Resolution 02S-1002: 2002:

Whereas, The current condition of Colorado's national forest lands poses public health and safety risks to citizens of this state in the areas of air quality, water quality and quantity, and potential loss of human life and damage to property and threatens damage to municipal infrastructure; and

Whereas, The USDA Forest Service has allowed an unnatural volume of dead fuels to

build up within national forest lands that poses an immediate threat to nearly 20 million forested acres in Colorado; and

Whereas, The number of forested acres in Colorado treated by the USDA Forest Service has been grossly insufficient to mitigate the threat of unnatural, catastrophic wildfires; and

Whereas, Insect and disease infestations have impacted over 500,000 acres throughout the state, and these conditions have exacerbated the already dangerous wildfire hazard; and

Whereas, Major wildfires that occur in Colorado's backcountry decrease wildlife habitat, including that of federally-listed species, and threaten to denude critical watersheds surrounding high-mountain reservoirs; and

Whereas, The wildfires in Colorado have burned 357,000 acres in 25 counties, cost \$110 million, received 14 FEMA declarations, and burned over 1,000 structures; now, therefore,

*Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Sixty-third General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

1. That we, the members of the House of Representatives, hereby recognize the dangerous conditions of Colorado's forests and urge aggressive action by the USDA Forest Service to mitigate the threat of wildfire on national forest lands in the State of Colorado through the removal of vast accumulations of dead fuels.

2. That we urge federal action on a fire strategy to comprehensively reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and improve the overall condition of Colorado's forests.

3. That we support all possible and necessary steps in order for projects to control various insect- and disease-impacted forests in Colorado.

4. That we support utilizing an appropriate mix of fire-prevention activities and management practices including forest restoration, treatment of at-risk forest stands, grazing, selective tree removal, and other measures to control insects and pathogens, removal of excessive dead ground fuels, and small-scale prescribed burns.

5. That we strongly encourage the Congress of the United States to expeditiously pass legislation, maintain sufficient National Fire Plan funding, and encourage refinements of current regulations to address the gridlock issue obstructing active land management by the USDA Forest Service and other federal land management agencies.

*Be It Further Resolved,* That copies of this Resolution be sent to the USDA Forest Service and to each member of the Colorado Congressional Delegation.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1646, FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT, FISCAL YEAR 2003

SPEECH OF

#### HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 2002

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, first let me congratulate the Chairman of the International Relations Committee, Mr. HYDE, for successfully managing this important piece of legislation. For many years it has proven difficult to reach the stage of final congressional approval of a freestanding State Department authorization act, but in his first term as Chairman he has managed to do just that.

I also congratulate him for including authorizations of appropriations for a number of ac-

counts within the jurisdiction of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, where I serve as Chairman. Funding is authorized for the International Military Education and Training account, the Foreign Military Financing account, the account for nonproliferation, anti-terrorism, demining and related programs, and the account for Migration and Refugee Assistance. In the case of the last account, let me say that the Appropriations Committee has recommended a funding level for refugee assistance that is \$95 million above the President's request, or a total of \$800 million. This is due in large part because of the strong interest shown by Chairman HYDE and the International Relations Committee in providing adequate funds to assist overseas refugees. This is but one example of the ways in which the authorization committee and the Appropriations Committee can work together for the public good.

The conference report also follows the lead of the Appropriations Committee in authorizing an additional \$200 million in anti-terrorism assistance for Israel, as well as authorizing ongoing assistance for Israel and Egypt.

However, I did not want this conference report to pass without expressing my strong concern about section 1224, which restricts assistance for Lebanon. This provision would reduce assistance for Lebanon by \$10 million on an annual basis unless the armed forces of Lebanon have been deployed to the border between Israel and Lebanon, and unless the Government of Lebanon is effectively asserting its authority in that area.

Like all Americans, I strongly condemn terrorist attacks that have been launched from Lebanese territory by Hizballah. If I thought this provision would save one life, I would strongly support it.

However, Lebanon is currently not in control of its own destiny, and cannot control much of its own territory, due to the presence of a foreign occupying power. That power is Syria, and it is Syria that has tolerated and encouraged terrorism against Israel.

The effect of this language could be to cut the Lebanon assistance program from \$35 million to \$25 million. Very little of our assistance is provided to the Government; the cut will primarily affect assistance to American educational institutions in Lebanon such as the American University in Beirut and the Lebanese American University. The cut will also adversely impact the other major American program in Lebanon, which promotes community development in villages and towns throughout that country. It is designed to empower local communities by providing assistance for small-scale infrastructure, such as community centers and water systems, and for micro-enterprise activities. It also allows the United States to offer social and economic benefits to impoverished Lebanese citizens, rather than forcing them to rely on the social services that terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hizballah may offer. In that sense, the provision is counterproductive and will have precisely the opposite effect of that intended by its author.

I hope we can revisit this issue very soon. If we don't, I think we will all regret the fact that this conference report will have diminished the ability of the United States to contribute to a positive future for the people of Lebanon.